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The reflections of memory : an account of a cognitive approach to historically informed staging

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APPENDIX : Six texts set in music by Marc-Antoine Charpentier

SELECTION EDITED AND TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY GILBERT R. BLIN

Foreword

« To speak of an interpreter means to speak of a translator.
And it is not without reason that a well-known Italian proverb,
which takes the form of a play on words, equates translation with betrayal. »

Igor Stravinsky⁴

This appendix offers the poetic texts of six compositions by Marc-Antoine Charpentier, presented here in the order they are analysed in the Chapter 3 of *The Reflections of Memory* and where the question of the attributions to Donneau de Visé, Palaprat and Thomas Corneille are discussed:

- *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* (H480)
- *La Pierre Philosophale* (H501)
- *La Couronne de Fleurs* (H486)
- *Actéon* (H481)
- *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers* (H488)
- *Orphée descendant aux Enfers* (H471)

Librettos and poems have been transcribed from the *Meslanges autographes* in *Œuvres complètes de Charpentier*. Paris: Minkoff, 1996-2018. For each piece, a translation into English and a short synopsis have been added.

These translations and synopses originated from my stage productions for the Boston Early Music Festival from 2008 to 2018. The translations are following as much as possible the meaning and the order of the verses of the original French texts: the work on these translations started with the purpose in mind that they will be of use for the performers. Therefore, special attention to the order of English words was given to help the singers to memorize in an easy way the French original sequence, even if the English grammar was not perfectly respected. The other purpose of these translations is to give the singers and instrumentalists an insight in the meaning of the verses, but again more importantly, in the order this meaning is delivered. This specific way to translate is to help performers, who do not speak the French language perfectly, by giving them the possibility of understanding, at the right moment, the meaning of what they are singing or accompanying.

The goal of this approach is to give the performers, singers and continuo players, the possibility to establish a closer relation with the process of declamation. Thus, these transcriptions/translations are essential tools to prepare the dramatic and musical work on

⁴Stravinsky, Igor. *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*. [French original text and] English translation by Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl. Preface by George Seferis. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 1970, pp. 168 & 169.

French declamation, following French period taste and Charpentier's individual style. For a French opera of the seventeenth century, I believe that the musical interpretation should be closely linked to the style of the poetry, and to its specific construction, not only to its general meaning.

Editions of the French texts, translations and synopses have all been reviewed for this appendix.

***LES PLAISIRS DE VERSAILLES* (H480)**

MUSIC BY MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

TEXT ATTRIBUTED TO JEAN DONNEAU DE VISÉ

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY GILBERT R. BLIN

This French libretto of *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* is copied from the original text of Charpentier's autograph manuscript (*Meslanges autographes* in *Œuvres complètes de Charpentier*, Vol. 11. Paris: Minkoff, 1998).

The free spellings used by Charpentier have been updated with reference to those employed in modern editions of Molière's plays. Capitalization has been established following the printing custom of the time : it is used to start at each new poetic line, but also emphasizes the importance of certain words.

The text of the libretto is very complex in its wording and also presents a great array of rare vocabulary : notes are added when the sense of the word needs some explanation. The dictionary of Antoine Furetière (1619–1688) has been used as a reference : Furetière, Antoine. *Dictionnaire universel, contenant généralement tous les mots françois tant vieux que modernes, et les termes de toutes les sciences et des arts... par feu Messire Antoine Furetière...* La Haye: A. et R. Leers, 1690.

LES PLAISIRS DE VERSAILLES

Synopsis

The Pleasures of Versailles

First Scene

The action takes place in the palace of Versailles, during a soirée in the *Grands Appartements* of King Louis XIV. A concert is about to begin, and La Musique, aware of having the ear of the King, asks for veneration from those present as she prepares to entertain him.

Second Scene

La Conversation arrives, and as is her wont, cannot refrain from commenting: La Musique begins to sing an air and La Conversation interrupts to praise it. Increasingly annoyed by such unwelcome ongoing comments, La Musique argues with La Conversation and threatens to storm out in anger.

Third Scene

Alarmed, the other Pleasures call upon Comus, the god of banquets, to mediate. He offers fine wine, exquisite cakes and hot chocolate. La Musique refuses – she fears chocolate will only energize La Conversation.

Fourth Scene

Comus then pleads for help from Le Jeu who offers various games, and suggests they gamble to settle their argument, but La Musique only wants silence, and La Conversation now only wants to talk and drink chocolate. La Musique and La Conversation continue their bickering until the latter explains that at court, civility is the rule: each must accommodate the other's quirks. Finally, they are reconciled – La Musique admits her outburst was only a cunning plan to poke fun at La Conversation, for the amusement of King Louis. La Musique and La Conversation agree, together with Comus and Le Jeu, to continue their roles as the Pleasures of Versailles and to entertain the great King after his recent martial labors and before the glorious ones to come.

LES PLAISIRS DE VERSAILLES

Libretto and translation

Les Plaisirs de Versailles	The Pleasures of Versailles
Personnages	Characters
La Musique	Music
La Conversation	Conversation
Comus, dieu des festins	Comus, god of feasts
Le Jeu	The god of Games
Chœur de[s] Plaisirs	Chorus of the Pleasures
<i>La Scène est dans les app.[artements]</i>	<i>The scene takes place in the apartments</i>
Ouverture	Overture
Scène Première	First Scene
La Musique	Music
Que tout cède aux douceurs de mes accords charmants. Mortels, Dieux, révérez la divine Harmonie ! C'est peu que de bannir d'entre les éléments La Discorde, mon ennemie ; Et de régler les mouvements De ces corps lumineux, dont la force infinie Fait naître les événements Des biens ou des maux de la vie.	Let all yield to the sweetness of my enchanting strains. Mortals, gods, revere the divine Harmony! It is but a small thing to banish, from among the elements, My enemy Discord; As it is to order the movements Of those luminous spheres, whose infinite power Gives birth to the events— Good or ill—of life.
Mais ce qui rend sur tant Mon sort digne d'envie C'est que du plus fameux de tous les Conquérants, J'ai la gloire d'être chérie. Mortels, Dieux, révérez la divine Harmonie ! Dans ses glorieux passe-temps ⁵ Le Monarque des lys me met de la partie. Que tout cède aux douceurs de mes accords charmants.	But above all others, what renders My fate worthy of envy, Is that I have the glory to be cherished By the most famous of all Conquerors. Mortals, gods, revere the divine Harmony! The Monarch of the lilies Counts me among his glorious pastimes. Let all yield to the sweetness of my enchanting strains.
Chœur des Plaisirs	Chorus of the Pleasures
Mortels, Dieux, révérez la divine Harmonie ! Dans ses glorieux passe-temps Le Monarque des lys la met de la partie. Que tout cède aux douceurs de ses accords charmants.	Mortals, gods, revere the divine Harmony! The Monarch of the lilies Counts her among his glorious pastimes. Let all yield to the sweetness of her enchanting strains.
Scène Seconde	Second Scene
La Musique	Music
Quel objet importun à mes yeux se présente ?	What is this unwelcome thing that appears before me?
La Conversation	Conversation
Rare fille du ciel, ne m'apprehendez pas ! Il est vrai que ma langue est un peu frétilante Mais je viens ici que pour parler tout bas, Et faire remarquer d'une façon galante De vos expressions l'adresse et les appas. Rare fille du ciel, ne m'apprehendez pas !	Rare daughter of heaven, do not dread me! It is true that my tongue is a trifle flip But I only come here to talk very softly And to draw attention, in a gallant manner, To the skill and allure of your phrasing. Rare daughter of heaven, do not dread me!

⁵ « Passe-temps »: « Passsetems. F.M. Divertissement; occupation agréable à quoy on employe son temps » (Furetière) This could be one of the first historical occurrences of the word, as its use is only fully established in 1694. This suggests a major writer as author of the libretto.

La Musique L'attention et le silence S'accordent mieux à mon projet Que votre babil indiscret Qui jamais ne finit Et qui toujours commence. Accordons-nous : parlez ! La Conversation Accordons-nous : chantez ! La Musique Et moi je me tairai. La Conversation Je vous écouterai. La Musique Je suis prête à chanter. La Conversation Si vous voulez chanter... La Musique Si vous voulez vous taire... La Conversation Je suis prête à me taire, chantez donc ! La Musique Taisez-vous ! La Conversation Je me tais pour vous plaire. La Musique Pour vous plaire, je chanterai. La Conversation Chantez-donc ! La Musique Taisez-vous ! La Conversation Je me tais pour vous plaire. La Musique Pour vous plaire, je chanterai. Amour, viens animer ma voix Sans toi, sans ta douce tendresse Je ne pourrai toucher Le plus charmant des rois. La Conversation Que cette expression a de délicatesse, Rien ne peut approcher de sa naïveté. La Musique Babillarde divinité, Pour Dieu, tenez votre promesse. Amour, viens animer ma voix. Sans toi, sans ta douce tendresse Je ne pourrai toucher Le plus charmant des rois. Mais si ta flamme	Music Attention and silence Are more in keeping with my intent. Than your indiscreet babbling Which never ends And is always starting up again. Let us agree: speak! Conversation Let us agree: sing! Music Then I shall be silent. Conversation I shall listen to you. Music I am ready to sing. Conversation If you want to sing... Music If you want to be silent... Conversation I am ready to be silent. Then, sing! Music Be silent! Conversation I am silent to please you. Music To please you, I shall sing. Conversation Sing, then! Music Be silent! Conversation I am silent to please you. Music To please you, I shall sing. Love, come animate my voice. Without you, without your sweet tenderness, I will not be able to move The most charming of kings. Conversation Such delicacy of expression! Nothing can match its naïveté! Music Babbling deity, For God's sake, keep your promise. Love, come animate my voice. Without you, without your sweet tenderness, I will not be able to move The most charming of kings. But if your flame
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À mes chants donne l'âme J'aurai le bonheur D'attendrir son grand cœur⁶. La Conversation Ah ! que cette chute⁷ est heureuse Elle enlève, transporte, elle enchante les sens. La Musique Puisse, déesse caquetteuse, Si bien s'embarrasser ta langue entre tes dents Que de louer à contretemps Elle perde à jamais l'habitude fâcheuse Et devienne un exemple à la secte nombreuse De ces beaux esprits fatigant Qui pour toujours louer Assassinent les gens. Menuet La Conversation De grâce, de grâce, Encore cette courante ! La Musique C'est un menuet, un menuet, Ignorante. La Conversation Un menuet ? Je le veux bien Je meure, je meure, Si j'en savais rien Et si d'en rien savoir Je me mets fort en peine ! La Musique C'en est trop, Rompons l'entretien ! La Conversation Adieu, sociable sirène. N'allez pas de dépit faire votre cercueil⁸ Des poétiques eaux de la docte Hippocrène⁹ ! Votre perte mettrait toute la France en deuil. Adieu, sociable sirène !	Gives soul to my songs, I will have the good fortune Of moving his great heart. Conversation Ah, what a fortunate ending! It captures, transports, It enchants the senses. Music Prattling deity, may Your tongue become so entangled between your teeth That it forever loses the tiresome habit Of ill-timed praise, And become an example to the large faction Of wearisome wits Who, with their perpetual praise, Bore people to death. Minuet Conversation For heaven's sake, please, Not that courante again! Music It is a minuet, a minuet, You ignoramus. Conversation A minuet? I would be well pleased Should I die If I knew anything about it, And if I come to know anything, It would pain me greatly! Music That's it, No more discussion! Conversation Farewell, sociable siren; Don't go off in a fit of pique to drown yourself In the poetic waters of the Muses' fountain! Losing you would send the whole of France into mourning. Farewell, sociable siren!
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⁶ In this case « Cœur » means both the organ, the symbol of love, but also the courage like in the famous « Rodrigue as-tu du cœur? » from Corneille. *Le Cid*, Act I, Scene 5.

⁷ Here the character of Conversation, insensitive to music, refers to the poetic wording, and the idea of the last verse: « Une chute », in French literature terminoly, refers to the element of surprise provided by the author at the end of a text, which illuminates its meaning, and can lead to reinterpret it. The desired tone can be pathetic, humorous or ironic (in this case also known as pun: pun of the epigram), it is here lyrical... This unexpected conceit is prepared to allow the vigilant reader to guess gradually the meaning of the text: Amour, toucher, flamme, attendrir, coeur.

⁸ The expression « faire son cercueil » is close enough to the modern French expression « Faire son deuil de quelque chose »: to resign to be deprived of something.

⁹ In Greek mythology, Hippocrène was the name of a spring on Mont Helicon. It was sacred to the Muses and the water was supposed to bring forth poetic inspiration when imbibed. Its Greek name literally translates as "Horse's Fountain" as it was said to have been formed by the hooves of Pegasus knocking on the ground.

Chœur des Plaisirs Arrêtez, demeurez ! Ne quittez point ces lieux Quoi, pour un discours qui vous pique, Louis, ce héros glorieux Manquerait des plaisirs que donne la musique ? Arrêtez, demeurez ! Ne quittez point ces lieux. La Musique Qu'elle finisse donc son babil odieux ! La Conversation Parler est le talent unique Que j'ai reçu des dieux, Et je veux m'en servir Malgré les envieux. La Musique Sortons, sortons. On blâmera mon peu de politique Mais je ne saurais faire mieux. Chœur des Plaisirs Arrêtez, demeurez ! Ne quittez point ces lieux Quoi, pour un discours qui vous pique, Louis, ce héros glorieux Manquerait des plaisirs que donne la musique Arrêtez, demeurez, Ne quittez point ces lieux. Scène Troisième Un Plaisir Venez, dieu des festins, Venez, dieu des festins, Apaiser leur querelle ! Comus Que vos débats Ici ne fassent point d'éclat Et je vous donnerai, mes belles, À toutes deux du chocolat¹⁰. La Musique Du chocolat ? Dieu vous en garde. De crainte qu'on en donne À cette babillarde,	Chorus of the Pleasures Stop, stay! Do not leave these grounds. Merely because of a speech that irritates you, Louis, that glorious hero, Would be deprived of the pleasures that music gives? Stop, stay! Do not leave these grounds. Music Then let her cease her odious babbling! Conversation To speak is the only talent That I received from the gods, And I want to make use of it, Despite the envious. Music Let us leave! Let us leave! They will blame my lack of diplomacy, But it's the best I can do. Chorus of the Pleasures Stop, stay! Do not leave these grounds. Merely because of a speech that irritates you Louis, that glorious hero Would be deprived of the pleasures that music gives? Stop, stay, Do not leave these grounds. Third Scene A Pleasure Come, god of feasts, Come, god of feasts, Assuage their quarrel. Comus Don't let your disputes Cause the slightest stir here, And I will give some hot chocolate To you both, my beauties. Music Some chocolate? God forbid, As I fear that you would give some To that blabbermouth.
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¹⁰ Chocolate: Hot chocolate, cocoa. Cacao from America was a Spanish import in the seventeenth century and became a very fashionable drink. The drink gets official encouragement in France by French queens, princesses of Spain, Anne of Austria and Maria Theresa of Austria or by physicians, who after finding first the drink having negative effects, praised its benefits, as Nicolas de Blégné who published in 1687: *Le bon usage du thé, du café et du chocolat pour la préservation & pour la guérison des maladies*. Paris: Veuve D'Houry et Veuve Nion, 1687. France discovered chocolate in 1615 in Bayonne during the wedding of Anne of Austria, daughter of King Philip III of Spain with the King of France, Louis XIII. But it was Louis XIV and his wife Maria Theresa of Austria who brought chocolate in the habits of the court of Versailles. Chocolate is then consumed as hot beverage such as coffee. In the same way as for exotic drinks like tea or coffee, the Church pondered the question of whether it is a food or a source of pleasure. In 1662, following the work of Cardinal Francesco Maria Brancaccio (1592–1675) who published « Liquidum non frangit jejunum » (the « drink [including chocolate]- do not break the fast »), Pope Alexander VII (1599–1667) ends the theological debates: chocolate is said « maigre » and can even be drunk during Lent.

Moi-même je le dis : Je n'en veux point goûter. Son caquet échauffé Ne pourrait s'arrêter. La Conversation Le chocolat est bon, Cher Comus. Il me tarde que par votre crédit J'en puisse un peu tâter. La Musique Non Comus ! La Conversation Comus, l'écouter C'est s'amuser à la moutarde¹¹ ! Du chocolat ! La Musique Dieu vous en garde... La Conversation Que par votre crédit, J'en puisse un peu, J'en puisse un peu tâter. La Musique Son caquet échauffé Ne pourrait s'arrêter. Comus D'un vin délicieux de la côte rôtie Qui ferait rire un Jérémie¹², J'ai des bouteilles à foison. Buvez-en, je vous y convie ! Si l'on a des chagrins Il fait qu'on les oublie Et loin de troubler la raison Ce jus divin la fortifie. La Conversation Comus, le chocolat est bon. La Musique Du chocolat, Dieu vous en garde, Non Comus ! La Conversation Comus l'écouter, C'est s'amuser à la moutarde ! Du chocolat ! La Musique Dieu vous en garde... La Conversation Que par votre crédit, J'en puisse un peu,	For me, I say: I do not care to taste it. Her overheated prattle Would not stop. Conversation Chocolate is good, Dear Comus. I long, thanks to your favor, To have a little taste. Music No, Comus! Conversation Comus, to listen to her Is to waste time on trifles! Chocolate! Music God forbid. Conversation Thanks to your favor, I may have a little, I may have a little taste. Music Her overheated prattle Would never stop. Comus Of a delicious wine from Côte-Rôtie, Which would make a stern prophet laugh, I have bottles in abundance. I invite you to drink up! If you have sorrows, It makes you forget them, And far from upsetting reason, This divine liquor strengthens it. Conversation Comus, chocolate is good. Music Chocolate, God forbid, No, Comus. Conversation Comus, to listen to her Is to waste time on trifles! Chocolate! Music God forbid... Conversation Thanks to your favor, I may have a little, I may have a little taste.
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¹¹ Proverbial: To waste time looking after an indifferent thing when one should spend it on a more consensual.

¹² Jérémie 35:6: King James Bible: « But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever ».

J'en puisse un peu tâter¹³. La Musique ...Son caquet échauffé Ne pourrait s'arrêter¹⁴. Comus J'ai des confitures liquides¹⁵ Que prisent les goûts les plus fins De pâtes¹⁶ et de massepains¹⁷, J'ai d'assez hautes pyramides¹⁸ Et j'en dispose ici Comme Dieu des festins. La Musique & La Conversation Nous ne voulons, Comus, Ni massepains ni tartes¹⁹. Comus Si vous ne voulez pas de ces mets délicats, Pour finir vos débats, Déesses, prenez donc des cartes, Le Dieu du Jeu qui vient En peut fournir à tas. Scène Quatrième Le Jeu Si les cartes, les dés, L'innocent trou-madame²⁰,	Music ...Her overheated prattle Would not stop. Comus I have juicy preserves Prized by the finest palates. I have many towering pyramids Of fruit jellies and marzipan And I give them here, As the God of feasts. Music & Conversation We want, Comus, Neither marzipan nor tarts. Comus If you do not want these delicacies, Goddesses, then to end your quarrelling, Take up cards: The God of Games, who comes, Can furnish plenty. Fourth Scene Games If the cards, the dice, The innocent trou-madame, The billiard, the checkers, The backgammon, the chess,
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¹³ The seventeenth century spelling of the word “taster” makes it clearer for the English than for the French reader of today.

¹⁴ Chocolate had, like coffee, the reputation to energize. The Marquise de Sevigné said, in her Letter dated April 15, 1671, that Chocolate « vous flatte pour un temps, et puis il vous allume tout d'un coup une fièvre continue, qui vous conduit à la mort. » (it flatters you for a time, and then you suddenly turn on a continuous fever which lead you to death.). See: *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné de sa famille et de ses amis, Tome premier*. Paris: Hachette, 1863, p. 269.

¹⁵ The seventeenth century sees the progress in France of the culture of fruits and therefore the consummation and the art of “confiture”, to preserve in sugar, designating jams, compotes, jellies, marmalades dates from this period.

¹⁶ Furetière : « Pastes, Espèce de Confiture presque sèches qui se font avec du sucre, des fruits ou des fleurs. Des pâtes de pistaches, d'abricots, de coings, &c. » It is here in complement to « confitures liquides » of the previous verse. In today French culinary products : pâtes de fruits.

¹⁷ Made with almond powder, egg white and sugar (close to the Calissons of Aix-en-Provence).

¹⁸ It was customary to present sweets in architectural displays on the tables (see planches « Confiseur » of *L'Encyclopédie*).

¹⁹ Furetière: « Tarte [...] Pièce de four qu'on sert au dessert, & surtout aux nopces & aux baptêmes. Elle est faite de crème, ou de confitures entièrement, ou des deux ensembles, séparées par divers quartiers. [...] il y a aussi des tartes de massepain faites d'amandes pilées & glacées avec du sucre. Tarte en pomme, est une tarte faite des pommes ».

²⁰ In 1682, the game of trou-madame was located in the Salon of Mars where there were a number of small card-tables, covered with green velvet fringed with gold, and in the center was a larger table which held a trou-madame of inlaid work. Trou-madame was played by rolling little ivory balls through arcades into holes marked with numbers that indicated their point value.

Le billard²¹, le damier, le tric-trac²², les échecs, Les rafles²³ et les cochonnets²⁴ Ne sauraient dissiper Les chagrins de votre âme, Vous ne verrez jamais la fin de vos procès. Chœur des Plaisirs Si les cartes, les dés, L'innocent trou-madame, Le billard, le damier, Le trictrac, les échecs, Les rafles et les cochonnets Ne sauraient dissiper Les chagrins de votre âme, Vous ne verrez jamais la fin de vos procès. Le Jeu & Comus Pour vous apaiser donc, belles, que faut-il faire ? Le Jeu Si mes jeux attirants... Comus Si mes morceaux friands... Le Jeu & Comus ...N'ont pas de quoi vous plaire ? La Musique Il me faut du silence. La Conversation A moi du chocolat. Chœur des Plaisirs Voyez le beau sujet pour faire tant d'éclat. Comus Déesse des discours, cette tasse en est pleine. Prenez, buvez et taisez-vous si vous pouvez.	The pair-royals and the jacks Cannot dispel Your soul's sorrows, You will never see the end of your strife. Chorus of the Pleasures If the cards, the dice, The innocent trou-madame, The billiards, the checkers, The backgammon, the chess, The pair-royals and the jacks Cannot dispel Your soul's sorrows, You will never see the end of your strife. Games & Comus Then to appease you, my beauties, what must be done? Games If my attractive games... Comus If my dainty morsels... Games & Comus ...have nothing to please you? Music I must have silence. Conversation And I chocolate. Chorus of the Pleasures See what a fuss they make about such a matter. Comus Goddess of discourse, this cup is full. Take, drink, and be silent if you can. Conversation
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²¹ In Louis XIV's Versailles, the Salon of Diana, named after the goddess Diana who was the goddess of the hunt, was used for billiard games during the evening soirées. In this context, the room was also known as the "chamber of applause" due to the continuous applause from the Court ladies that immediately broke out every time Louis XIV made a brilliant stroke - this happened quite often since the Sun King was very good at billiard. The pool table was covered in red velvet and trimmed with gold fringes; it was placed at the centre of the room. The floors were covered with Persian carpets.

²² Trictrac was the game of the high society both for men and women, very fashionable during the reign of Louis XIV. The book *Le traité du Jeu de trictrac, comme on le joue aujourd'hui*, edited in 1698, is printed again in 1701 et 1715 : « l'excellence, la beauté et la sincérité qui se rencontrent dans ce jeu font que le beau monde qui a de la politesse s'y applique avec beaucoup de soin, en fait son jeu favori et le préfère aux autres jeux. En effet ce beau jeu a tant de noblesse et de distinction, que nous voyons qu'il est plus à la mode que jamais. Les dames y ont une très grande attache » in *Le Jeu du trictrac comme on le joue aujourd'hui*. Paris : Charpentier, 1715, pp. 2-3.

²³ Game of dices when, as explained by Furetière, "all the three dices have the same points".

²⁴ "Le cochonnet", literally "the piglet", is the name given to the jack, the little ball of wood, used for the game of skittles, or lawn bowling. « On appelle, Jouër au cochonnet, lors qu'on joue à la boule en se promenant, & qu'on change à chaque coup de but. On jete une balle, ou une pierre au hazard à chaque fois, qu'on appelle cochonne, & elle sert de but aux joueurs pour ce coup-là seulement. » in Furetière. For depiction of the games involving this cochonnet, see: N°174 in *Fêtes & Divertissements à la cour*. (Château de Versailles du 29 novembre 2016 au 26 mars 2017). Paris: Gallimard, 2016, pp. 192-193.

La Conversation Volontiers. La Musique C'est bien dit, Je consens qu'elle en prenne. Mon luth, ma douce voix, Puisqu'il nous est permis, Publions ce grand Roi ! Que tout le monde admire Son grand nom, la terreur De tous les ennemis De son heureux empire, Et l'amour qu'il inspire Aux peuples qui lui sont soumis. La Conversation Ah, que ce chocolat foisonne²⁵, Il n'est sucré qu'autant qu'il faut. Et je gagerais que personne N'en saurait boire de plus chaud. La Musique Eût-il été si chaud que ta langue effilée Pour quatre mois et plus en eût été brûlée ! La Conversation Tout beau ! Tout beau ! Ceci passe le jeu. Souffrez, mélodieuse dame, Que je vous chante votre gamme, Et que je me ressente²⁶ un peu. Si parler selon vous est le plus grand des crimes. Allez chanter dans les couvents, Le silence y règne en tout temps. A qui prêchez-vous vos maximes ? Prenez-vous ces beaux courtisans pour des minimes²⁷? Apprenez qu'à la Cour on s'accommode aux gens²⁸. Quoi ? Pour un mi fa sol que la musique entonne, Il ne sera permis de parler à personne ?	Willingly. Music Well said, I agree that she should have some. My lute, my sweet voice, Since it is permitted to us, Let us proclaim this great King. Let the whole world admire His great name, the terror Of all the enemies Of his happy empire, And the love that he inspires In his subjects. Conversation Ah, this chocolate is so light; It has just the right amount of sugar. And I bet that no one Could ever drink it hotter. Music If only it were so hot that your sharp tongue Would be burned for four months and more! Conversation Not so fast! This goes beyond a joke. Allow me, melodious lady, To sing your scale to you, With a touch of resentment. If to speak, according to you, is the greatest of all crimes, Go sing in the convents; Silence reigns there all the time. To whom are you preaching your maxims? Do you take these beautiful courtiers for some minims? Know that at Court one adapts to others. What? Because music would sound a mi fa sol, People will not be allowed to talk to one another? What a fine state of affairs! Don't tell me France
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²⁵ « Foisonner », that Furetière gives as « abonder » is also a culinary term which suggests an augmentation of volume, of taste and flavours: « qui gonfle au cours de la cuisson ».

²⁶ Furetière: « Ressentir [...] on dit aussi “s'en ressentir” , pour s'en vanger [venger]. Je m'en ressentirai ».

²⁷ The Minims (also called the Minimi or Order of Minims, abbreviated O.M.) are members of a Roman Catholic religious order of friars founded by Saint Francis of Paola in fifteenth-century Italy. The Order soon spread to France, Germany and Spain, and continues to exist today. The name Minims comes from the Italian word minimo, meaning the smallest or the least, and their founder would call himself “il minimo dei minimi”. Francis of Paola wanted to distinguish himself as being of even less significance than the Friars Minor founded by his patron saint, Francis of Assisi. This diatribe of Conversation is taking a deeper meaning, when knowing that Charpentier was mostly a composer of religious music and had been writing for various convents in Paris.

²⁸ This idea of mutual tolerance in social relationship and is a character of civility found already in *Il Cortegiano* (*The Book of the courtier*) by Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529) and is a constant mark of the French ideal courtier. Written by Castiglione over the course of many years, it was ultimately published in 1528 in Venice just before his death. A French edition was published in 1537 in Paris. A second translation by Gabriel Chappuys was published in Lyon in 1585. In 1690, the work of Castiglione was translated again by Abbé Jean-Baptiste Duhamel. See: Castiglione, Baldassare. *Le parfait courtisan et la dame de cour / trad. nouv. de l'italien du Cte Baltasar Castiglione...* Paris: E. Loyson, 1690. See also the work of Gaciàn: *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia* (1647) translated into French: Gracian, Baltasar. *L'Homme de Cour, Troisième Edition (Revüe & corrigée), Traduit & Commenté. Amelot, de La Houssaie*. La Haye : Abraham Troyel, 1692.

La belle chose que voilà ! Dirait-on pas que la France Tomberait en décadence Sans son ut ré mi fa sol la ? La belle chose que voilà ! Chœur des Plaisirs Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah ! La belle chose que voilà ! La Musique Déesse un peu trop chatouilleuse, Mon procédé par vous devrait être avoué²⁹ : Je n'affectai jamais cet air de précieuse³⁰ Que pour donner matière à votre humeur railleuse Et mettre en plus beau jour votre esprit enjoué. Déesse un peu trop chatouilleuse, Mon procédé par vous devrait être avoué. La Conversation Ah, s'il en est ainsi, Musique ingénieuse, J'ai tort de vous avoir joué. La Musique Si Louis en a ri³¹, Je me tiens trop heureuse. Chœur des Plaisirs Grand Roi tout couvert de lauriers, Si pour te délasser de tes travaux guerriers, Nos flutes et nos voix te semblent impuissantes, Prends nos désirs pour des effets Et puissent sans tarder tes armes florissantes, Malgré les têtes renaissantes De cette hydre³² opposée au Bonheur de la paix Remplir tes généreux souhaits.	Would fall into decadence Without its do, re, mi, fa, so, la? What a fine state of affairs! Chorus of the Pleasures Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! What a fine state of affairs! Music Overly sensitive Goddess, You should appreciate my approach: I only affected this learned air To provide material for your raillery And to show your playful spirit in the best possible light. Overly sensitive Goddess, You should appreciate my approach. Conversation Ah, if that is so, Astute Music, I was wrong to have made fun of you. Music If Louis has laughed because of it, I shall count myself happy enough. Chorus of the Pleasures Great King, all wreathed in laurels, If to relax you from your martial labors, Our flutes and voices seem powerless, Take our wishes as deeds, And, without delay, may your flourishing arms, Despite the reborn heads Of this hydra opposed to the delights of peace, Fulfill your noble desires.
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²⁹ « Avouer un procédé » : agréer un procédé, apprécier un procédé, accepter un procédé.

³⁰ The French literary style called “préciosité” (French for preciousness) arose in France in the 17th century from the lively conversations and playful word games of *les précieuses*, the witty and educated intellectual ladies who frequented the *salon* of Catherine de Vivonne, marquise de Rambouillet, who offered a Parisian refuge from the dangerous political factionalism and coarse manners of nobles during the minority of Louis XIV and the violence of the Fronde (France civil war). Molière satirized the Précieuses in his comedy *Les Précieuses ridicules* in 1659. The main character of *La comtesse d'Escarbagnas* is also a précieuse and in 1672 Charpentier wrote music (H. 494) for the performance of the play in front of the king. Philippe Quinault's career was linked with Précieuses when it began at the Hôtel de Bourgogne in 1653. There is a possibility that this is a small attack against the librettist of Lully, which would parallel the « Utmiutsol » before.

³¹ This simple line indicates that the piece was intended to be performed in front of the king.

³² This “hydre” is likely here to point at the coalition of the countries in war with France. But as it was customary to allegory to represent heresy under the shape of a multiple headed snake: a hydra, it could also be the countries which followed the reformed religion (Protestant).

LA PIERRE PHILOSOPHALE (H501)

MUSIC BY MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

TEXT BY THOMAS CORNEILLE AND JEAN DONNEAU DE VISÉ

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY GILBERT R. BLIN

While created at the Comédie-Française on 23 February 1681, *La Pierre Philosophale* was not printed. Fortunately, the « livre de sujet », a kind of very detailed synopsis tells us the essential components of this « comédie mêlée de spectacles ». See : [Corneille, Thomas and Donneau de Visé, Jean]. *La Pierre Philosophale, comédie mêlée de spectacle...* Paris: C. Blageart, 1681. The following synopsis is made from this unique testimony while the sung text of the last intermède of *La Pierre Philosophale* is copied from the manuscript of Charpentier. See: *Meslanges autographes* in *Œuvres complètes de Charpentier*, Vol. 18. Paris: Minkoff, 2000.

LA PIERRE PHILOSOPHALE

Synopsis

The Philosopher's stone

Mr. Maugis, an adept of alchemy, is nearly bankrupt due to his search for the philosopher's stone: the « stone » able to transform base metal into gold. The Marquis, who loves Maugis' daughter but cannot gain his permission to wed her, pretends to support the father's magical obsessions by proposing him to be initiated into the mysteries of the Rose-Croix, the mystical order. Maugis, excited to belong to a secret society of Cabbalists, has to undergo a series of initiation tests, each more frightening than the last.

At the end of Act IV, Mr. Maugis believes he is finally introduced to the elemental spirits and close to discover a treasure: a gnomide and a gnome, spirits of Earth; a mermaid and a merman, spirits of Water; two salamanders, spirits of Fire; and a « sylphide » and a sylph, spirits of Air. In fact the Marquis (*Chanson du Silphe parlant à sa maîtresse*) and his accomplices are fooling the gullible man.

Eager to complete his initiation by choosing a mate among these spirits, the greedy « bourgeois » gives his preference to the gnomide, knowing she is the guardian of the subsurface richness, but expresses « grief at finding her so little ». The spirits remedy this and the gnomide, after returning for a moment to earth, the element of her birth comes back having grown so much that the spirits must stop her growth by a comic « That's enough, that's enough ».

Ultimately, he agrees to the marriage of his daughter with her suitor, but only because he believes the marquis to be a true spirit of air.

LA PIERRE PHILOSOPHALE

Act IV, Divertissement: text and translation

La Pierre Philosophale	The Philosopher's Stone
Acte IV, Divertissement	Act IV, Divertissement
Chœur des Quatre Éléments Les Sages, par un choix heureux, Aujourd'hui, nous couvrent de gloire. Chantons, célébrons la victoire Que l'Amour remporte sur eux.	Chorus of the Four Elements The Wise Men, by a happy choice, Today cover us with glory. Let us sing, let us celebrate the victory That Love wins over them.
 Vous, sur qui de cet heureux choix Vient de tomber la préférence, Joignez les charmes de la danse Au concert que forment nos voix.	 You, upon whom this happy choice Has just fallen, Join the charms of the Dance To the Concert formed by our voices.
La petite Gnomide Ce bel âge Nous engage A n'aimer que les plaisirs. Est-ce vivre Que de ne pas suivre Le penchant de nos tendres désirs ?	The little Gnome girl This young age Commits us To love only the pleasures. Is it living Not to follow The inclinations of our tender desires?
 Sans tendresse Tout nous blesse, Jamais presque de beaux ans. Quand on aime, Ce n'est pas de même L'Amour donne un éternel printemps.	 Without tenderness, Everything hurts, Years are rarely beautiful. When we love, This is not the same; Love gives an eternal Spring.
Chanson du Silphe parlant à sa maîtresse [le Marquis] Je suis d'un élément léger ; Mais avec tant d'appas c'est en toute assurance Que vous pouvez vous engager. L'Amour qui sous vos lois se plaît à me ranger, Ne vous répond que trop de ma persévérance.	Song of the Sylph speaking to his mistress [le Marquis] I'm from a light Element. But having so many charms, you may confidently Engage with me. Love, who is pleased to place me under your Laws, Fully vouches for my perseverance.
Duo pour le Feu et l'Eau Le spectacle est assez beau De nous voir unis ensemble. On le trouvera nouveau ; Mais il me semble Que le feu peut souffrir l'eau, Lorsque l'amour les assemble.	Duet for Fire and Water It is a remarkable spectacle To see us united together. One may find it novel, But it seems to me That fire can suffer water, When Love joins them together.
Chœur des Quatre Éléments Les Sages, par un choix heureux, Aujourd'hui, nous couvrent de gloire. Chantons, célébrons la victoire Que l'Amour remporte sur eux.	Chorus of the Four Elements The Wise Men, by a happy choice, Today cover us with glory. Let us sing, let us celebrate the victory That Love wins over them.
 Croissez, Gnomide, croissez, Il faut satisfaire un sage. Ses vœux vous sont adressés. Croissez, Gnomide, croissez Hâtez vous, paraissez. Quel éclat ! Que sur terre elle aura d'avantage ! Auprès de cette taille, auprès de ce visage, On verra peu d'objets qui ne soient effacés. C'est assez... C'est assez !	 Grow up, Gnome girl, grow up, One must satisfy a Wise Man. His vows are addressed to you, Grow up, Gnome girl, grow up. Make haste, appear. What brilliance! On earth, she will have every advantage! Next to this height, next to this face, We will see few objects that are not eclipsed. That's enough... that's enough!

LA COURONNE DE FLEURS (H486)

MUSIC BY MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

TEXT AFTER MOLIÈRE, ATTRIBUTED TO JEAN BIGOT DE PALAPRAT

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY GILBERT R. BLIN

This French libretto of *La Couronne de Fleurs* is copied from the original text of Charpentier's autograph manuscript (*Meslanges autographes* in *Œuvres complètes de Charpentier*, Vol. 7. Paris: Minkoff, 1996).

The librettist of *La Couronne de Fleurs* has been using some sections of the text written by Molière for the first performances of his last play, *Le Malade Imaginaire* in 1673. The libretto of Molière for the Prologue of *Le Malade Imaginaire* has been therefore used as inspiration to review capitalization of words, punctuation, lineation and stage directions. See: *Le Malade Imaginaire Comédie, meslée de Musique, & de Dance. Représentée sur le Theatre du Palais Royal. par le feu Molière. Sur la Copie.* Paris: Christophe Ballard, seul imprimeur du Roy pour la Musique, rue S. Jean de Beauvais, ou Mont Parnasse. L'An 1673.

In addition, the spellings used by Charpentier have been modified with reference to those employed in modern editions of Molière plays.

La Couronne de Fleurs **Synopsis**

The Crown of Flowers

A Grove

First Scene

Flore, the goddess of flowers, brings back spring after a terrible winter. She invites the French shepherdesses and shepherds to return to the grove, not so long since a battlefield. To celebrate the peace that Louis XIV has just given them, the goddess announces a poetry contest: to whomever most eloquently sings about the recent deeds of the king, Flore promises she will bestow a crown of flowers.

Second Scene

In anticipation of the contest, all call for Nature to be silent: birds, winds and waters should listen to their royal songs.

The poetic contest begins, and the shepherdesses and shepherds try to invent the most beautiful poem praising the king. Amaranthe compares Louis's warlike power to that of a devastating torrent flooding the countryside. Forestan speaks of Louis at the head of his army as a terrifying bolt of lightning. Hyacinthe contrasts Louis with the fabled heroes of ancient Greece, who are nothing compared with the living monarch. Mirtil asserts that future generations will have great difficulty believing the least of Louis's exploits, as they will have nothing comparable in their own day.

Third Scene

Pan, the god of shepherds, appears to call a halt to the contest, as Louis's exploits are too great a subject for pastoral voices. The shepherds obey, but they express their regrets at being unable to obtain the coveted crown of flowers. Flore decides to award each of the contestants a flower from the crown. Gods and shepherds wish that as Louis is the master of the world, he may also become the master of time and live a hundred years to see a hundred springs.

LA COURONNE DE FLEURS

Libretto and translation

LA COURONNE DE FLEURS <i>PASTORALE</i> PERSONNAGES La Déesse Flore Le Dieu Pan Rosélie, Amaranthe, Hyacinthe, Bergères Forestan, Sylvandre, Mirtil, Bergers Troupe de Bergères et de Bergers Suite du Dieu Pan (Satyres, jouant des flûtes) Deux Zéphirs dansants <i>La scène est dans un bocage.</i> Scène Première <i>Flore, Deux Zéphirs.</i> Flore Renaissiez, paraissez, Tendres fleurs sur l'herbette, Flore le souhaite. Les frimas retirés Dans leur sombre retraite, Souffrent que le printemps Rajeunisse nos champs. Vos couleurs, belles fleurs, Ne seront plus ternies le long des prairies, Et les sources de sang que la Paix a taries Ne sont plus en état De souiller votre éclat. Bergères et Bergers, accourez à ma voix, Revenez sans peur dans ce bois. LOUIS en a banni les funestes alarmes Que les cris des mourants et le fracas des armes Y faisaient régner autrefois. Si la gloire a pour vous des charmes Revenez sans peur dans ce bois. A qui chantera mieux les glorieux exploits Du fameux Conquérant qui met fin à nos larmes, Ma main destine les honneurs De cette Couronne de Fleurs. <i>Entrée de Ballet. Toute la Troupe des Bergers et des Bergères va se placer en cadence autour de Flore.</i> Scène Seconde <i>Flore, Rosélie, Amaranthe, Hyacinthe, Sylvandre, Forestan, Mirtil, Bergères et Bergers.</i>	THE CROWN OF FLOWERS <i>PASTORAL</i> CHARACTERS The Goddess Flore The God Pan Rosélie, Amaranthe, Hyacinthe, Shepherdesses Forestan, Sylvandre, Mirtil, Shepherds Company of Shepherdesses and Shepherds Retinue of the God Pan (Satyrs playing flutes) Two dancing Zephyrs <i>The action takes place in a grove.</i> First Scene <i>Flore, Two Zephyrs.</i> Flore Be reborn, appear, Tender flowers on the grass, Flore wishes it. The cold weather, having withdrawn To its somber refuge, Allows the spring To rejuvenate our fields. Your colors, lovely flowers, Will no longer be tarnished in the meadows, And the sources of blood now dried up by the Peace Are no longer able To sully your brilliance. Shepherdesses and Shepherds hasten to my voice, Return without fear to this grove. LOUIS has banished the dire sounds That the cries of the dying and the clash of arms Caused to reign here before. If glory attracts you with its charms Do not fear returning to this grove. To whomever best sings the glorious deeds Of the famous Conqueror who put an end to our tears, My hand will bestow the honors Of this Crown of Flowers. <i>Ballet Entrée. The whole Company of Shepherds and Shepherdesses move to the music and group themselves around Flore.</i> Second Scene <i>Flore, Rosélie, Amaranthe, Hyacinthe, Sylvandre, Forestan, Mirtil, Shepherdesses and Shepherds.</i>
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Rosélie Puisque Flore en ces lieux nous convie À chanter de LOUIS les exploits triomphants, Rossignols, écoutez les plus beaux de nos chants Et mourez de plaisir et d'envie. Bergères Puisque Flore en ces lieux nous convie À chanter de LOUIS les exploits triomphants, Rossignols, écoutez les plus beaux de nos chants Et mourez de plaisir et d'envie. Sylvandre Trop indiscrets Zéphirs, Retenez vos soupirs Tandis que de LOUIS nous chanterons la gloire. Bergers Trop indiscrets Zéphirs, Retenez vos soupirs Tandis que de LOUIS nous chanterons la gloire. Un Berger Et vous, fontaines et ruisseaux, Gardez-vous de mêler à nos chants de victoire Le bruit importun de vos eaux. Bergers Et vous, fontaines et ruisseaux, Gardez-vous de mêler à nos chants de victoire Le bruit importun de vos eaux. <i>Les Violons jouent un Air pour animer les Bergers au combat, tandis que Flore comme juge va se placer au pied de l'arbre avec deux Zéphirs, et que le reste comme Spectateurs va occuper les deux coins du Théâtre.</i> Amaranthe Lorsqu'un torrent enflé par un soudain orage Précipite du haut des monts Ses flots bruyants dans les vallons, Rien ne s'oppose à son passage Qu'il ne ravage. Il ébranle, il renverse, il entraîne les Bois. Pasteurs et Troupeaux à la fois Tout fuit, mais vainement, la fureur qui le guide. Tel, et plus fier et plus rapide, Marche LOUIS, dans ses Exploits. Tous Tel, et plus fier et plus rapide, Marche LOUIS, dans ses Exploits. <i>Ballet. Les Bergers et Bergères de son côté dansent autour d'elle sur une Ritornelle, pour exprimer leurs applaudissements.</i> Forestan La foudre menaçant qui perce avec fureur L'affreuse obscurité de la nue enflammée, Fait, d'épouvante et d'horreur Trembler le plus ferme cœur: Mais à la tête d'une armée LOUIS jette plus de terreur. Tous Mais à la tête d'une armée LOUIS jette plus de terreur.	Rosélie Since Flore invites us to this place To sing the triumphant exploits of LOUIS, Nightingales, listen to the loveliest of our songs And die of pleasure and desire. Shepherdesses Since Flore invites us to this place To sing the triumphant exploits of LOUIS, Nightingales, listen to the loveliest of our songs And die of pleasure and desire. Sylvandre Zephyrs, so indiscreet, Suppress your sighs While we sing of LOUIS's glory. Shepherds Zephyrs, so indiscreet, Suppress your sighs While we sing of LOUIS's glory. A Shepherd And you, fountains and streams, Refrain from mixing with our songs of victory The unwelcome noise of your waters. Shepherds And you, fountains and streams, Refrain from mixing with our songs of victory The unwelcome noise of your waters. <i>The Violins play an Air to inspire the Shepherds to the contest, while Flore as judge takes her place under the [May] tree along with two Zephyrs, and the others, as Audience, go to both sides of the Stage.</i> Amaranthe When a torrent swollen by a sudden storm Rushes from the mountaintops Into the valleys with flooding waters, Nothing can stand in the path Of the ravaging torrent. It shakes, it topples, it sweeps away the Woods. Shepherds and Flocks together, All flee its fury in vain. Thus, yet even more proudly and swiftly, Marches LOUIS on his exploits. All Thus, yet even more proudly and swiftly, Marches LOUIS on his exploits. <i>Ballet. The Shepherds and Shepherdesses from her side dance around her to a Ritornelle, to express their acclaim.</i> Forestan The menacing lightning that pierces with fury The dreadful darkness of the flaming clouds, Causes even the most courageous heart To tremble with terror and horror: But, at the head of an army, LOUIS strikes even greater terror. All But, at the head of an army, LOUIS strikes even greater terror.
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<i>Ballet. Les Bergers et les Bergères de son côté font encore la même chose.</i> Hyacinthe Des Héros fabuleux que la Grèce a chantés, Par un brillant amas d'illustres vérités Nous voyons la gloire effacée. Et tous ces fameux demi-dieux Que vante l'Histoire passée Ne sont point à notre pensée Ce que LOUIS est à nos yeux. Tous Et tous ces fameux demi-dieux Que vante l'Histoire passée Ne sont point à notre pensée Ce que LOUIS est à nos yeux. <i>Ballet. Les Bergers et les Bergères de son côté font encore la même chose.</i> Mirtil LOUIS fait à nos temps, par ses faits inouïs, Croire les plus beaux faits que nous chante l'histoire Des Siècles évanouis. Mais nos Neveux dans leur gloire, N'auront rien qui fasse croire Les moindres exploits de LOUIS. Tous Mais nos Neveux dans leur gloire, N'auront rien qui fasse croire Les moindres exploits de LOUIS. <i>Ballet. Les Bergers et les Bergères de son côté font encore de même, après quoi les deux partis se mêlent.</i>	<i>Ballet. The Shepherds and Shepherdesses from his side also dance.</i> Hyacinthe And those fabled heroes of ancient Greece, By a multitude of [his] illustrious deeds We see their glory now obscured. And all those famous demigods Of which History boasts Are as nothing, in our minds, Compared to LOUIS in our eyes. All And all those famous demigods Of which History boasts Are as nothing, in our minds, Compared to LOUIS in our eyes. <i>Ballet. The Shepherds and Shepherdesses from her side dance again.</i> Mirtil LOUIS, by his incredible deeds, Allows us now to believe in the fabled deeds Of the vanished Centuries. But our Descendants, however glorious, Will have nothing to allow them to grasp Even the least of LOUIS's feats. All But our Descendants, however glorious, Will have nothing to allow them to grasp Even the least of LOUIS's feats. <i>Ballet. The Shepherds and Shepherdesses from his side dance as did the others, and then the two parties mingle together.</i>
Scène Troisième <i>Pan, Satyres, jouant des flûtes, Flore et les Susdits.</i> Pan Quittez, quittez Bergers, ce dessein téméraire, Hé, que voulez-vous faire? Chanter sur vos chalumeaux, Ce qu'Apollon sur sa Lyre Avec ses chants les plus beaux, N'entreprendrait pas de dire? C'est donner trop d'Essor au feu qui vous inspire, C'est voler vers les Cieux sur des ailes de Cire, Pour tomber dans le fonds des Eaux. Pour chanter de LOUIS, l'intrépide courage, Il n'est point d'assez docte voix, Point de mots assez grands pour en tracer l'Image; Le silence est le langage Qui doit louer ses exploits. Tous Pour chanter de LOUIS, l'intrépide courage, Il n'est point d'assez docte voix, Point de mots assez grands pour en tracer l'Image;	Third Scene <i>Pan, Satyrs playing flutes, Flore, and the aforementioned.</i> Pan Give up, Shepherds, give up this bold plan. Eh! What do you intend to do? To sing with your pipes That which Apollon on his Lyre, With his loveliest songs, Would not undertake to tell? It is giving too much Elevation to the passion that inspires you, It is like flying toward the Skies with Wax wings, Only to fall to the bottom of the Waters. To sing of LOUIS's intrepid courage, There is no voice knowledgeable enough, No words grand enough to sketch the picture of it; Silence is the language That must praise his exploits. All To sing of LOUIS's intrepid courage, There is no voice knowledgeable enough, No words grand enough to sketch the picture of it;

Le silence est le langage Qui doit louer ses exploits. Rosélie Nous nous taisons: Pan nous l'ordonne. Au grand Dieu des bergers notre troupe abandonne L'intérêt le plus cher de ses justes désirs. Jugez, Reine des fleurs, quels sont nos déplaisirs: Cette soumission nous ôte une Couronne Pour qui chacun de nous a fait mille soupirs. Flore Bien que, pour étaler les Vertus immortelles D'un Roi qui sous ses pieds voit l'univers soumis, La force manque à vos esprits, Vous méritez, Bergers, que de ces fleurs nouvelles Je partage entre vous le prix: Dans les choses grandes et belles Il suffit d'avoir entrepris. Flore et Pan Dans les choses grandes et belles Il suffit d'avoir entrepris. <i>Ballet. Les deux Zéphirs dansent avec la Couronne à la main, dont ils donnent ensuite les Fleurs aux Bergères et aux Bergers.</i> Rosélie et Amaranthe Belles fleurs, tous les ans Nous vous voyons paraître Dans nos jardins et dans nos champs, Quand le printemps vous fait renaître. Tous Belles fleurs, tous les ans Nous vous voyons paraître Dans nos jardins et dans nos champs, Quand le printemps vous fait renaître. Rosélie et Amaranthe Puisse le grand LOUIS, l'Honneur des conquérants, Comme il est du monde le Maître Devenir le Maître du temps Et voir à cent hivers succéder le printemps. Tous Puisse le grand LOUIS, l'Honneur des conquérants, Comme il est du monde le Maître Devenir le Maître du temps Et voir à cent hivers succéder le printemps. <i>Dernière et Grande Entrée de Ballet. Zéphirs, Bergers, et Bergères tous se mêlent, et il se fait entre eux des jeux de danse.</i> Fin.	Silence is the language That must praise his exploits. Rosélie We silence ourselves: Pan commands us. For the great God of the shepherds our troupe forsakes The dearest pursuit of our rightful wishes. Consider, Queen of flowers, our unhappiness. This submission deprives us of a Crown For which each of us has sighed a thousand times. Flore Although, to spread the immortal Virtues Of a King who sees the subdued universe at his feet, Your spirits lack the strength, You deserve, Shepherds, that from these new flowers I share the prize among you. For in noble and beautiful things It is enough to have tried. Flore and Pan For in noble and beautiful things It is enough to have tried. <i>Ballet. The two Zephyrs dance with the Crown in their hands, and then give the Flowers to the Shepherdesses and the Shepherds.</i> Rosélie and Amaranthe Lovely flowers, every year we see you appear In our gardens and in our fields When spring makes you live anew. All Lovely flowers, every year we see you appear In our gardens and in our fields When spring makes you live anew. Rosélie and Amaranthe May the great LOUIS, the Honor of conquerors, As he is the Master of the world Become the Master of time And see a hundred winters succeeded by spring. All May the great LOUIS, the Honor of conquerors, As he is the Master of the world Become the Master of time And see a hundred winters succeeded by spring. <i>Last and Great Ballet Entrée. Zephyrs, Shepherds, and Shepherdesses all join together in dancing.</i> The End.
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ACTÉON (H481)

MUSIC BY MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

TEXT ATTRIBUTED TO THOMAS CORNEILLE

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY GILBERT R. BLIN

The score of Marc-Antoine Charpentier was never published before the XXth century; the manuscript kept at Bibliothèque nationale in Paris is the only source from the time. The modern facsimile edition was therefore used for establishing the transcription of the libretto and its translations. See: *Meslanges autographes* in *Œuvres complètes de Charpentier*, Vol. 21. Paris: Minkoff, 2002.

The text written in the score includes spelling mistakes. These and the lack of punctuation make clear that the text must have been dictated to Charpentier; mistakes in particular are due to similarity of sound in French language. Apart from some rare exception, if one reads the text loud, the verses are very clear and fluid. The text has been transcribed into regular French. Uppercase letters, especially for the first words of verses and initial letters of important words, have been added following the accepted conventions of the period for lyric poetry. But in order to improve the understanding, spelling has been updated and punctuation reestablished.

The English translation proposed is a rather free adaptation in English of the libretto. This translation might especially be helpful when the order of the words is very different in French and English.

On the first page of the manuscript score there is no mention of a writer and the origin of these verses is difficult to trace. The quality of the poetry indicates an author used to the concise style of French opera, established by Quinault. But, to the difference of this writer's librettos for Lully, there are little indications for stage movements or elaborate depictions of the sets in *Actéon*. To balance this lack of material, information which was, during a Quinault/Lully's opera performance, visible on stage, or at least in the printed libretto at the disposal of the audience, the dialogues of *Actéon* present an abundance of descriptions of everything visual: the spaces, the actions, the characters. This fact leads me to think that this Pastoral may have been written for a concert performance, where all meaning had to be delivered by sound, and not designed for the operatic stage, where visual elements had the power to complement the poetry.

Thomas Corneille knew very well the story of Actaeon as he published, in 1669, a translation in verse of some of the books of Ovide's *Metamorphoses*³³. The style, used by the poet to translate the tale of Actaeon, and especially some similarities in vocabulary, are too close to the libretto of the Pastoral of Charpentier to be only a matter of chance.

³³ The edition accessible on the site of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (www.gallica.bnf.fr) is *Les Metamorphoses d'Ovide, Mises en vers françois par T. Corneille de l'Academie Française*. Suivant la copie de Paris, à Liège, chez J.-F. Broncart, 1698. For the story of Actaeon, see Tome 1, pp. 151-160.

ACTÉON

Synopsis

Actaeon

First Scene

In the Gargaphie valley in Greece, the Theban prince Actaeon and a group of hunters celebrate the exhilarating delights of their pursuit on a sunny morning. A bear has been spotted, and Actaeon prays to Diana, the goddess of the hunt, to favor them with success in catching it. The murmuring of the trembling woods is interpreted as a good omen by the hunters, and the party runs after its prey.

Second Scene

Meanwhile, Diana and her companions are bathing in a nearby spring to relax after their hunt. The bath of the chaste goddess is graced by the singing and dancing of her virginal nymphs. Daphne and Hyale warn potential lovers to stay away, and Arethusa reminds all present that one should scorn Love to avoid sadness.

Third Scene

At noon, a weary Actaeon takes leave of his party to find a quiet glade to rest. The peaceful valley awakens his sensuality, yet he soon claims his true passion is for freedom and wishes to reject Love forever. Encountering the immortal bathers, Actaeon is attracted by the forbidden and attempts to hide where he can spy on them, but is soon discovered. Diana is outraged that a mortal has seen her in the nude. The goddess throws water on the hunter with a curse: may he tell his story if he can!

Fourth Scene

Actaeon is left alone to face his frightful destiny. His fear is matched only by his desperation as he sees his body being covered with fur. He is powerless against his inexorable metamorphosis into a stag and, with what is left of his human voice, begs for death.

Fifth Scene

Later, the hunters call for Actaeon, eager for him to join back their party and admire the magnificent stag the dogs have brought down.

Sixth Scene

To the hunters awed dismay, Juno descends from the heavens, and the goddess reveals that the dead stag is Actaeon, torn to pieces by his own hounds. Jove's wife explains that she engineered this horrible death to get revenge on Europa, Actaeon's Theban ancestor, for having consorted with Jove. The hunters mourn the tragic death of their young prince.

ACTÉON

Libretto and translation

ACTÉON <i>Pastorale en Musique</i> Personnages Actéon Diane Junon Aréthuse, Daphné, Hyalé, Nymphes de Diane Chœur de Chasseurs Chœur de Nymphes de Diane <i>La scène est dans la vallée de Gargaphie.</i> Scène Première. <i>Actéon, Chœur de Chasseurs.</i> Chœur de Chasseurs Allons, marchons, courons, hâtons nos pas ! Que l'ardeur du soleil qui brûle nos campagnes, Que le pénible accès des plus hautes montagnes, Dans un dessein si beau ne nous retardent pas. Actéon Déesse par qui je respire, Aimable Reine des forêts, L'ours que nous poursuivons désole ton empire, Et c'est pour l'immoler à tes divins attraits Que la chasse ici nous attire. Conduis nos pas, guide nos traits, Déesse par qui je respire, Aimable Reine des forêts. Deux Chasseurs Vos vœux sont exaucés, et par le doux murmure Qui vient de sortir de ce bois, le ciel vous en assure. Suivons ce bon augure ! Chœur de Chasseurs Allons, marchons, courons... Scène Deuxième. <i>Diane, Aréthuse, Daphné, Hyalé, Chœur de Nymphes de Diane.</i> Diane Nymphes, retirons-nous dans ce charmant bocage ! Le cristal de ces pures eaux, Le doux chant des petits oiseaux, Le frais et l'ombrage, sous ce vert feuillage, Nous feront oublier nos pénibles travaux. Ce ruisseau, loin du bruit du monde, Nous offre son onde. Délassons-nous dans ses flots argentés, Nul mortel n'oserait entreprendre De nous y surprendre. Ne craignons point d'y mirer nos beautés !	ACTÉON <i>Pastoral in Music</i> Characters Actéon (Actaeon) Diane (Diana) Junon (Juno) Aréthuse (Arethusa), Daphné (Daphne), Hyalé (Hyale), Nymphs of Diane Chorus of Hunters Chorus of Nymphs of Diane <i>The action takes place in the valley of Gargaphie.</i> First Scene. <i>Actéon, Chorus of Hunters.</i> Chorus of Hunters Let us go, march, run, hasten our steps. Let not the sun's ardor that burns our countryside, Let not the difficult path to the highest mountains, Delay us in our fine plan. Actéon Goddess for whom I breathe, Gentle Queen of the forests, We chase the bear that ruins your empire, And it is to sacrifice it to your divine charms That the hunt draws us here. Direct our steps, guide our darts, Goddess for whom I breathe, Gentle Queen of the forests. Two Huntsmen Your wishes are granted, and in a soft murmur Emanating from this wood, the heavens assure you. Let us follow this good omen ! Chorus of Hunters Let us go, march, run... Second Scene. <i>Diane, Aréthuse, Daphné, Hyalé, Chorus of Nymphs of Diane.</i> Diane Nymphs, let us retire to this charming grove ! The crystal of these pure waters, The sweet song of little birds, The cool and the shade under these green boughs, Will make us forget our hard work. This stream, far from the noise of the world, Offers us its waves. Let us relax in its silver tide, No mortal would dare to attempt To surprise us here. Let us not be at all afraid to admire the reflection of our beauty.
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Chœur de Nymphes Charmante fontaine, Que votre sort est doux ! Notre aimable Reine Se confie à vous. D'un tel avantage L'Idaspe et le Tage Doivent être jaloux. Daphné et Hyalé Loin de ces lieux, tout cœur profane ! Amants, fuyez ce beau séjour ! Vos soupirs, et le nom d'Amour, Troubleraient le bain de Diane. Nos cœurs, en paix dans ces retraites, Goûtent de vrais contentements. Gardez-vous, importuns amants, D'en troubler les douceurs parfaites. Aréthuse Ah ! Qu'on évite de langueurs Lors qu'on ne ressent point les flammes Que l'Amour, ce tyran des cœurs, Allume dans les faibles âmes ! Ah ! Qu'on évite de langueurs Quand on méprise ses ardeurs. Chœur de Nymphes Ah ! Qu'on évite de langueurs Quand on méprise ses ardeurs. Aréthuse Les biens qu'il nous promet N'en ont que l'apparence. Ne laissons point flatter Par ses appâts trompeurs Notre trop crédule espérance. Ah ! Qu'on évite de langueurs Quand on méprise ses ardeurs. Chœur de Nymphes Ah ! Qu'on évite de langueurs Quand on méprise ses ardeurs. Aréthuse Pour nous attirer dans ses chaînes Il couvre ses pièges de fleurs, Nymphes, armez vous de rigueurs Et vous rendrez ses ruses vaines. Ah ! Qu'on évite de langueur Lorsqu'on ne ressent point les flammes Que l'Amour, ce tyran des cœurs, Allume dans les faibles âmes. Ah ! Qu'on évite de langueurs Quand on méprise ses ardeurs. Chœur de Nymphes Ah ! Qu'on évite de langueurs Quand on méprise ses ardeurs. Scène Troisième. <i>Actéon, Diane, Aréthuse, Daphné, Hyalé, Chœur de Nymphes de Diane.</i> Actéon	Chorus of Nymphs Charming fountain, How sweet is your fate ! Our beloved queen Confides in you. Of such an advantage The rivers Hydaspes and Tagus Must surely be jealous. Daphné and Hyalé Stay far from this place, all worldly hearts ! Lovers, shun this beautiful sojourn, Your sighs and the name of Love Would mar Diane's bathing. Our hearts, in the peace of this retreat, Taste true happiness. Beware, unwelcome lovers : Do not disturb their perfect sweetness. Aréthuse Ah! How much languor one avoids When one succeeds in escaping the flames That Love, tyrant of hearts, Lights in weak souls ! Ah! How much languor one avoids When one despises his fires ! Chorus of Nymphs Ah! How much languor one avoids When one despises his fires ! Aréthuse The good things he promises us Only look that way. Let us not allow, His deceitful wiles, To flatter our credulous hope. Ah! How much languor one avoids When one despises his fires ! Chorus of Nymphs Ah! How much languor one avoids When one despises his fires ! Aréthuse To lure us into his chains He covers his traps with flowers. Nymphs, arm yourselves with rigor And you will render his ruses futile. Ah! How much languor one avoids When one succeeds in escaping the flames That Love, tyrant of hearts, Lights in weak souls ! Ah! How much languor one avoids When one despises his fires ! Chorus of Nymphs Ah! How much languor one avoids When one despises his fires ! Third Scene. <i>Actéon, Diane, Aréthuse, Daphné, Hyalé, Chorus of Nymphs of Diane.</i> Actéon Friends, the shortened shadows
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Amis, les ombres raccourcies Marquent sur nos plaines fleuries Que le soleil a fait la moitié de son tour. Le travail m'a rendu le repos nécessaire ; Laissez moi seul rêver dans ce lieu solitaire Et ne me revoyez que sur la fin du jour. Agréable vallon, paisible solitude, Qu'avec plaisir, sous vos cyprès Un amant respirant le frais Vous ferait le récit de son inquiétude ; Mais ne craignez de moi ni plaintes ni regrets. Je ne connais l'Amour que par la Renommée Et tout ce qu'elle en dit me le rend odieux ! Ah ! S'il vient m'attaquer, ce Dieu pernicieux, Il verra ses projets se tourner en fumée ! Liberté, mon cœur, liberté ! Du plaisir de la chasse, Quoi que l'Amour fasse, Sois toujours seulement tenté. Liberté, mon cœur, liberté. Mais quel objet frappe ma vue ? C'est Diane et ses sœurs, il n'en faut point douter. Approchons-nous sans bruit, cette route inconnue M'offrira quelque'endroit propre à les écouter. Diane Nymphes, dans ce buisson quel bruit viens-je d'entendre ? Actéon Ciel ! Je suis découvert. Diane Ah ! Perfide mortel, Oses-tu bien former le dessein criminel De venir ici nous surprendre. Actéon Que ferai-je, grands Dieux ? Quel conseil dois je prendre ? Fuyons, fuyons ! Diane Tu prends à fuir un inutile soin, Téméraire chasseur, et pour punir ton crime... Mon bras divin poussé du courroux qui m'anime, Aussi bien que de près te frappera de loin ! Actéon Déesse des chasseurs, écoutez ma défense. Diane Parle, voyons quelle couleur, Quelle ombre d'innocence Tu puis donner à ta fureur. Actéon Le seul hasard et mon malheur Font toute mon offense. Diane Trop indiscret chasseur, Quelle est ton insolence ! Crois-tu de ton forfait déguiser la noirceur Aux yeux de ma divine essence ? Que cette eau que ma main fait rejaillir sur toi	Show on our flowered plains That the sun has made half its turn. Work has made me in need of rest... Leave me alone to dream in this solitary place And do see me again only by the day's end. Pleasant dale, peaceful solitude, How much pleasure under your cypress trees A lover breathing in the cool Would tell you the tale of his worries. But fear neither complaint nor regret from me. I know Love only by Reputation And from all I have heard it seems odious to me ! Ah! If he attacks me, that pernicious god, He will see his schemes turn to smoke ! Freedom, my heart, freedom. By the pleasure of the hunt, Whatever love may do, Be always only tempted. Freedom, my heart, freedom. But what is surprising my sight ? It is Diane and her sisters; there can be no doubt. Let us approach silently, this secret path Will offer me a place from which to hear them. Diane Nymphs, what noise do I hear in that bush? Actéon Heavens ! I am discovered ! Chorus of Nymphs Ah! Perfidious mortal How dare you to contrive the criminal plan To come here to surprise us ? Actéon What shall I do, great Gods ? What counsel should I take? Let us flee, let us flee ! Diane You uselessly try to flee, Reckless hunter, and to punish your crime My divine arm pushed by the wrath that drives me Can strike you as well from afar as from close by ! Actéon Goddess of hunters, hear my defense. Diane Speak, let us see with what color, What shade of innocence, You can give to your lust. Actéon Only bad luck and my misfortune Are my whole offense. Diane Too indiscreet hunter, How insolent you are ! Do you hope to disguise the darkness of your crime To the eyes of my divine essence ? Let this water which my hand throws upon you Teach your kind to attack me !
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Apprenne à tes pareils à s'attaquer à moi ! Chœur de Nymphes Vante-toi maintenant, profane, D'avoir surpris Diane Et ses sœurs dans le bain ! Va pour te satisfaire, Si tu le peux faire, Le conter au peuple Thébain ! Scène Quatrième. <i>Actéon seul.</i> Actéon Mon cœur autrefois intrépide, Quelle peur te saisit ? Que vois-je en ce miroir liquide ? Mon visage se ride, Un poil affreux me sert d'habit, Je n'ai presque plus rien de me forme première, Ma parole n'est plus qu'une confuse voix... Ah ! Dans l'état où je me vois, Dieux qui m'avez formé du noble sang des rois, Pour épargner ma honte Ôtez moi la lumière. <i>Plainte</i> Scène Cinquième. <i>Actéon en cerf, Chœur de Chasseurs.</i> Chœur de Chasseurs Jamais troupe de chasseurs Dans le cours d'une journée Fut-elle plus fortunée, Jamais troupe de chasseurs Reçut-elle en un jour du ciel plus de faveurs. Actéon, quittez la rêverie, Venez admirer la furie De vos chiens acharnés sur ce cerf aux abois. Quoi ! N'entendez-vous pas nos voix ? Que vous perdez, grand Prince, à rêver dans un bois, Croyez qu'à nos plaisirs vous porterez envie, Et dans tous le cours de la vie, Un spectacle si doux ne s'offre pas deux fois. Scène Sixième. <i>Junon, Actéon en cerf, Chœur de Chasseurs.</i> Junon Chasseurs, n'appellez plus qui ne vous peut entendre ! Actéon, ce héros à Thèbes adoré, Sous la peau de ce cerf, à vos yeux Déchiré et par ses chiens dévoré, Chez les morts vient de descendre. Ainsi puissent périr les mortels odieux Dont l'insolence extrême Blessera désormais, des dieux La puissance suprême. Chœur de Chasseurs Hélas, Déesse, hélas ! De quoi fut coupable Ce héros aimable	Chorus of Nymphs Boast now, heathen, Of having surprised Diane And her sisters in the bath ! Go satisfy yourself, If you can, Tell it to the Thebans ! Fourth Scene. <i>Actéon alone.</i> Actéon My once-intrepid heart, What fear seizes you ? What do I see in this liquid mirror ? My face wrinkles, An ugly fur becomes my clothing, I almost have nothing left of my original form, My speech is but a confused voice... Ah! Finding myself in this state, Gods who made me from the noble blood of kings, Spare my shame Take my life. <i>Plainte</i> Fifth Scene. <i>Actéon as a stag, Chorus of Hunters.</i> Chorus of Hunters Never a troupe of hunters In the course of one day Has been so fortunate ! Never a troupe of hunters Received in a day so much favor from the heavens. Actéon, abandon the musing, Come admire the rage Of your ferocious dogs on this stag at bay. What ! Do you not hear our voices ? You are missing so much, great prince, dreaming in a wood. Be sure that you will envy our pleasures, And in a lifetime Such a sweet sight is not offered twice. Sixth Scene. <i>Junon, Actéon as a stag, Chorus of Hunters.</i> Junon Hunters, call no more the man who cannot hear you ! Actéon, that hero adored in Thebes, Under the skin of that stag, Torn apart before your eyes and devoured by his dogs, Descends to the dead. So will odious mortals die Whose extreme insolence Will hurt, henceforth, The supreme power of the Gods. Chorus of Hunters Alas, Goddess, alas! What was the crime Of this charming hero That he merited the horror of such a cruel demise ?
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Pour mériter l'horreur de si cruel trépas ? Junon Son infortune est mon ouvrage. Et Diane en vengeant l'outrage Qu'il fit à ses appas N'a que prêté sa main à ma jalouse rage. Oui, Jupiter, perfide époux, Que ta charmante Europe au ciel prenne ma place Sans craindre mes transports jaloux. Mais si jusqu'à son cœur n'arrivent pas mes coups, Actéon fut son sang et je jure à sa race Une implacable haine, un éternel courroux. <i>Elle s'envole.</i> Chœur de Chasseurs Hélas, est-il possible Qu'au printemps de ses ans ce héros invincible Ait vu trancher le cours de ses beaux jours ? Quel cœur, à ce malheur, ne serait pas sensible ? Faisons monter nos cris jusqu'au plus haut des airs. Que les rochers en retentissent, Que les flots écumants des mers, Que les Aquilons en mugissent, Qu'ils pénètrent jusqu'aux Enfers. Actéon n'est donc plus. Et sur les rives sombres, Le modèle des souverains, Le soleil naissant des Thébains, Est confondu parmi les ombres. FIN.	Junon His misfortune is my doing. And Diane, in avenging the outrage Which he did to her charms Merely loaned her hand to my jealous rage. Yes, Jupiter, perfidious husband May your charming Europa take my place in the heavens Without fear of my jealous transports. But if my blows cannot quite reach her heart, Actéon was her blood and I vow to her race An implacable hatred, an eternal wrath. <i>She flies off.</i> Chorus of Hunters Alas, is it possible That in his springtime this invincible hero Has seen the course of his beautiful days cut short ? What heart would be indifferent to this sad event ? Let us raise our cries to the highest air, May the rocks resound, May the foaming waves of the seas, May the cold winds roar, May they enter hell. Actéon is no more, And on the somber banks, The model of sovereigns, The rising sun of the Thebans, Is lost amongst the shadows. THE END.
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LA DESCENTE D'ORPHÉE AUX ENFERS (H488)

MUSIC BY MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

TEXT ATTRIBUTED TO THOMAS CORNEILLE

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY GILBERT R. BLIN

The libretto of *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers* has been transcribed from the manuscript of Charpentier. See: *Meslanges autographes* in *Œuvres complètes de Charpentier*, Vol. 13. Paris: Minkoff, 1999.

La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers **Synopsis**

The Descent of Orpheus to the Underworld

Act I *A Grove*

First Scene

The nymphs attend their friend Euridice during the preparations for her wedding with Orphée. Daphné, Aréthuse, and Enone invite nature to join in the rejoicing, but while picking flowers to make a wedding crown for her future husband, the bride is bitten by a poisonous snake.

Second Scene

Orphée arrives with the shepherds just in time to hear the last words of his beloved. Euridice dies, and Orphée laments with the shepherds. Overwhelmed by the sadness of his own wretched fate, Orphée decides to take his life.

Third Scene

The god of poetry and music, Apollon, suddenly appears and restrains Orphée. Apollon tells his son that Euridice can be restored to life: Orphée's songs will be able to move Pluton, god of the dead, and he will thus be able to win her back. Orphée decides to undertake the descent to the Underworld, and the nymphs and shepherds mourn the death of Euridice.

Act II *The Underworld*

First Scene

Three condemned criminals – Ixion, bound to a wheel in constant rotation; Tantale, condemned to an everlasting hunger and thirst; and Titye, whose liver is perpetually eaten by vultures – mourn their terrible fate.

Second Scene

Orphée has reached the Underworld, and the three culprits experience relief from their eternal punishments: the songs of Orphée soothe both the torturing furies and the damned.

Third Scene

Pluton and Proserpine, king and queen of the Underworld, appear. Pluton is surprised to see a mortal alive in the dominion of the dead and warns about the possible consequences of such an irregular presence. Orphée explains that Euridice is the object of his quest. Proserpine is moved, and so are the ghosts: they ask him to tell them more about

his troubles. Orphée recounts the tale of Euridice's untimely death and asks that his beloved be returned to life.

Pluton refuses, but Orphée reminds him that it is just a matter of time before Euridice will be returned to him. Proserpine and the shades intercede on Orphée's behalf; she tells him to use all the charms of his singing to affect Pluton. Orphée recalls how Pluton abducted the fair Proserpine from the earth because of his love for her. Pluton finally yields, and promises that Euridice will follow her faithful lover back to the world above. But the god makes a condition: Orphée's gaze must not fall upon his beloved before they have left the dominion of eternal night. After a moment of doubt, wondering how he will succeed at such a difficult test, Orphée begins his journey back to the light with Euridice.

Fourth Scene

The inhabitants of the Underworld regret his departure, but they derive great consolation from the sweet memory of his enchanting voice.

Act III

Not extant

LA DESCENTE D'ORPHÉE AUX ENFERS

Libretto and translation

LA DESCENTE D'ORPHÉE AUX ENFERS	THE DESCENT OF ORPHEUS TO THE UNDERWORLD
PERSONNAGES	CHARACTERS
Orphée Euridice	Orphée (Orpheus) Euridice (Eurydice)
Daphné, Enone, Aréthuse, Nymphes	Daphné (Daphne), Enone (Oenone), Aréthuse (Arethusa), Nymphs
Le Dieu Apollon La Déesse Proserpine Le Dieu Pluton	The God Apollon (Apollo) The Goddess Proserpine (Persephone) The God Pluton (Pluto)
Ixion, Tantale, Titye, criminels coupables	Ixion (Ixion), Tantale (Tantalus), Titye (Tityus), condemned criminals
Chœur de Nymphes, chantantes et dansantes Chœur de Bergers, chantants et dansants Chœur de Furies Chœur d'Ombres Heureuses Fantômes dansants	Chorus of Nymphs, singing and dancing Chorus of Shepherds, singing and dancing Chorus of Furies Chorus of Happy Shades Dancing Phantoms
Premier Acte <i>[La scène est dans un bocage.]</i>	First Act <i>[The action takes place in a grove.]</i>
Scène Première <i>Euridice, Daphné, Enone, Aréthuse, Chœur de Nymphes chantantes et dansantes.</i>	First Scene <i>Euridice, Daphné, Enone, Aréthuse, Chorus of Nymphs, singing and dancing.</i>
Daphné Inventons mille jeux divers, Pour célébrer dans ce bocage De deux parfaits époux le charmant assemblage.	Daphné Let us invent a thousand games, To celebrate, in this grove, The delightful union of two perfect spouses.
Chœur de Nymphes Inventons mille jeux divers, Pour célébrer dans ce bocage De deux parfaits époux le charmant assemblage.	Chorus of Nymphs Let us invent a thousand games, To celebrate, in this grove, The delightful union of two perfect spouses.
Daphné Que nos chansons percent les airs Et que nos pas légers en impriment l'image Sur l'herbe de ces tapis verts.	Daphné May our songs fly through the air And may our light steps leave their impression Upon these green carpets of grass.
Chœur de Nymphes Que nos chansons percent les airs Et que nos pas légers en impriment l'image Sur l'herbe de ces tapis verts.	Chorus of Nymphs May our songs fly through the air And may our light steps leave their impression Upon these green carpets of grass.
<i>Entrée des Nymphes.</i>	<i>Entrée of the Nymphs.</i>
Enone et Aréthuse Ruisseau qui dans ce beau séjour D'un printemps éternel entretient la verdure, Pour flatter Euridice et lui faire la cour Mêle à nos chants ton doux murmure. Et vous petits oiseaux,	Enone and Aréthuse Stream, which in this beautiful abode Preserves the verdure of an eternal spring, To please and pay court to Euridice Mingle your gentle murmuring with our singing. And you small birds,

Si vous voulez lui rendre hommage, Accordez votre doux ramage Au bruit charmant des eaux. <i>La Même Entrée des Nymphes se recommence comme ci-devant.</i> Euridice Compagnes fidèles, Je vois sous vos pas Mourir les appas De cent fleurs nouvelles. Ah! Ménagez mieux Ces dons précieux Des soupirs de Flore Et des pleurs de l'Aurore. Epargnez leurs attraits naissants: Je les prétends offrir au héros que j'attends. Couchons-nous sur la tendre herbe, Et mêlons à la violette Le vermeil de la rose et le blanc du jasmin. Nous en ferons une couronne Que je lui mettrai de ma main: Sa constance en est digne et l'Hymen me l'ordonne. Daphné et Chœur de Nymphes Qu'il se croira fortuné, Ce héros tendre et fidèle, De se voir couronné Par une main fidèle. Euridice Ah! Enone L'on ne goûte point de plaisirs sans douleurs, Chère compagne, et les plus fines Ne peuvent éviter la pointe des épines En se jouant avec les fleurs. Euridice Soutiens moi, chère Enone, un serpent m'a blessée, Je n'en puis plus, je tombe, et du venin pressée... Scène Seconde <i>Orphée, Troupe de Bergers chantants et dansants, et les susdites.</i> Orphée Qu'ai-je entendu? Que vois-je? Chœur de Nymphes et de Bergers O comble des malheurs! Orphée Quoi? Je perds Euridice? Euridice Orphée, adieu, je meurs. Orphée Ah! Bergers, c'en est fait, il n'est plus d'Euridice. Ses beaux yeux sont fermés pour ne jamais s'ouvrir.	If you want to pay her homage, Tune your gentle voices To the charming sound of the waters. <i>The Same Entrée of the Nymphs is repeated.</i> Euridice Faithful companions, Beneath your footsteps I see the charms perish Of a hundred new flowers. Ah! Take better care Of these precious gifts Of Flore's sighs And of Aurora's tears. Spare their nascent charms: I intend to offer them to the hero whom I await. Let us lay down on the tender grass, And mingle with the violet The red of the rose and the white of the jasmine. We shall make a crown That I will place on his brow: His constancy deserves it, and Hymen commands me to do so. Daphné and Chorus of Nymphs How fortunate he will think himself, This tender and faithful hero, To see himself crowned By a faithful hand. Euridice Ah! Enone One does not taste pleasures without pains, My dear companion, and even the most careful Cannot avoid the tips of the thorns When one plays with flowers. Euridice Support me, dear Enone, a snake has wounded me, I cannot stand, I am falling, and overcome by its venom... Second Scene <i>Orphée, a Troupe of Shepherds singing and dancing, and the aforementioned.</i> Orphée What did I hear? What do I see? Chorus of Nymphs and Shepherds O height of misfortune! Orphée What? I must lose Euridice? Euridice Orphée, farewell, I die. Orphée Ah! Shepherds, it is over, Euridice is no more. Her beautiful eyes are closed, never to open again.
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Impitoyables Dieux, vous la laissez mourir: Quelle rigueur, quelle injustice! L'infortunée à peine entrain dans ses beaux jours Et vous en terminez le cours. Chœur de Nymphes et de Bergers Ah, {Bergers/Nymphes}! C'en est fait, il n'est plus d'Euridice. Ses beaux yeux sont fermés pour ne jamais s'ouvrir. Impitoyables Dieux, vous la laissez mourir, Quelle rigueur, quelle injustice! L'infortunée à peine entrain dans ses beaux jours Et vous en terminez le cours. <i>Entrée de Nymphes et de Bergers désespérés.</i> Orphée Lâche amant, pourrais-tu survivre À la Nymphé qui t'a charmé? Non! Tu ne l'as jamais aimée Si tu diffères de la suivre. Mourons! Destin jaloux qui rompt de si beaux nœuds, Malgré toi le tombeau nous rejoindra tous deux. Scène 3ème <i>Apollon et les susdits.</i> Apollon Ne tourne point, mon fils, ce fer contre toi même, C'est répandre mon sang que de verser le tien. J'entre dans ta douleur, ton tourment est le mien, Suis mes conseils plutôt que ta fureur extrême. Orphée Hélas! Un malheureux qui perd tout ce qu'il aime, Après le coup affreux d'un si funeste sort Doit-il pas se donner la mort? Apollon Mon fils, ne perds point l'espérance. Va, pour ravoir ta Nymphé, implorer la puissance Du prince ténébreux qui règne chez les morts. Va lui faire sentir la douce violence De ces charmants accords Où je dressais tes mains dans ta plus tendre enfance. Tes chants adouciron ce tyran des Enfers. Tout barbare qu'il est, touché de ta demande, Ne doute point qu'il ne te rende La Nymphé que tu perds. <i>Apollon poursuit sa carrière.</i> Orphée Que d'un frivole espoir c'est flatter mon supplice! N'importe, essayons tout pour ravoir Euridice. Chœur de Nymphes et de Bergers Juste sujet de pleurs, Malheureuse journée. Sont ce là les douceurs Que les nœuds d'un saint hyménée Promettaient à ces jeunes cœurs?	Pitiless Gods, you let her die: What cruelty, what injustice! The poor Nymph had barely attained her prime And you end her life's course. Chorus of Nymphs and Shepherds Ah! {Shepherds/Nymphs}, it is over, Euridice is no more. Her beautiful eyes are closed, never to open again. Pitiless Gods, you let her die: What cruelty, what injustice! The poor Nymph had barely attained her prime And you end her life's course. <i>Entrée of desperate Nymphs and Shepherds.</i> Orphée Cowardly lover, can you outlive The Nymph who charmed you? No! You never loved her If you delay in following her. Die! Jealous Fate, who breaks such beautiful bonds, Despite you, the grave will reunite the two of us. Third Scene <i>Apollon and the aforementioned.</i> Apollon Do not turn this sword against yourself, my son: It would be shedding my own blood to spill yours. I join your grief; your torment is my own. Follow my advice instead of your extreme fury. Orphée Alas! A wretch who loses everything he loves, After the terrible blow of such a fatal destiny, Should he not take his own life? Apollon My son, do not lose hope. To recover your Nymph, go, appeal to the power Of the prince of darkness who rules the dead. Go, make him feel the gentle power Of that enchanting harmony In which I trained your hands from earliest childhood. Your songs will soften this tyrant of the Underworld. Barbaric though he is, when touched by your request, Do not doubt that he will return The Nymph that you lost. <i>Apollon continues on his course [across the sky].</i> Orphée How this feeble hope is increasing my torment! No matter, let me try everything to get Euridice back. Chorus of Nymphs and Shepherds True cause of tears, Unhappy day. Are these the sweet delights That the ties of holy wedlock Promised these young hearts?
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<i>Entrée de Nymphes et de Bergers désespérés.</i> Chœur de Nymphes et de Bergers Juste sujet de pleurs, Malheureuse journée. Sont ce là les douceurs Que les nœuds d'un saint hyménée Promettaient à ces jeunes cœurs? <i>Fin du Premier Acte.</i>	<i>Entrée of desperate Nymphs and Shepherds.</i> Chorus of Nymphs and Shepherds True cause of tears, Unhappy day. Are these the sweet delights That the ties of holy wedlock Promised these young hearts? <i>End of the First Act.</i>
Second Acte <i>L'Enfer</i> Scène Première <i>Tantale, Ixion, Titye, Furies.</i> Ixion, Tantale et Titye Affreux tourments, gênes cruelles, Qu'en ces lieux nous souffrons sans espoir de secours, Renaissantes douleurs, peines toujours nouvelles, Hélas, durerez vous toujours? Scène Seconde <i>Orphée, Fantômes dansant et les susdits.</i> Orphée Cessez, cessez, fameux coupables, D'emplir ces tristes lieux de cris réitérés. Les tourments que vous endurez Aux rigueurs de mon fait ne sont point comparables. Cessez, cessez, fameux coupables, D'emplir ces tristes lieux de cris réitérés. Ixion, Tantale et Titye Quelle touchante voix, quelle douce harmonie Suspend mon rigoureux tourment? Tantale Ni ces fruits, ni ces eaux ne me font plus d'envie. Ixion Je respire, ma roue arrête en ce moment. Titye De mes cruels vautours la faim semble assouvie. Ixion, Tantale et Titye Mortel, qui que tu sois, Si ton cœur est sensible à notre long martyre, Recommence à mêler au doux son de ta lyre Les tendres accents de ta voix. Orphée Je ne refuse point ce secours à vos larmes, Heureux si ces tristes accents Sur vos maux si puissants Pour attendrir Pluton, avaient les mêmes charmes. Heureux si ces tendres accents	Second Act <i>The Underworld</i> First Scene <i>Tantale, Ixion, Titye, Furies.</i> Ixion, Tantale, and Titye Terrible torments, cruel tortures, Which we suffer here with no hope of help, Ever-recurring pains, ever-new punishments, Alas, will you go on forever? Second Scene <i>Orphée, dancing Phantoms, and the aforementioned.</i> Orphée Cease, cease, you notorious criminals, To fill this mournful place with your continual cries. The torments that you suffer Cannot be compared with the harshness of my fate. Cease, cease, you notorious criminals, To fill this mournful place with your continual cries. Ixion, Tantale, and Titye What touching voice, what delightful harmony Suspends my harsh torment? Tantale No longer do these fruits nor these waters fill me with desire. Ixion I can breathe again; my wheel has suddenly stopped turning. Titye My cruel vultures' hunger seems assuaged. Ixion, Tantale, and Titye Mortal, whoever you are, If your heart is touched by our endless martyrdom, Once again combine the sweet sound of your lyre With the tender strains of your voice. Orphée I do not refuse to bring relief to your woes; I would be happy if these mournful strains, With such power to assuage your suffering, Could have the same charms in touching Pluton. I would be happy if these tender strains

Le portaient à finir les peines que je sens. Chœur des Furies et de Criminels Il n'est rien aux Enfers qui se puisse défendre De leurs charmes vainqueurs. Juges en par les pleurs Que tu nous vois rependre. Attendris nos barbares cœurs. Calme nos cuisantes douleurs. C'est ce qu'il n'appartient qu'à toi seul d'entreprendre. Que tes chants ont d'appas, qu'ils sont pleins de douceurs! Il n'est rien aux Enfers qui se puisse défendre De leurs charmes vainqueurs. <i>Entrée des Fantômes.</i> Scène Troisième <i>Pluton, Proserpine, Ombres heureuses chantantes et dansantes, et les susdits.</i> Pluton Que cherche en mon palais ce mortel téméraire? Ose-t-il en troubler le silence éternel? Prévoit-il ce qui suit son dessein criminel? Connait-il le danger qu'on court à me déplaire? Orphée Je ne viens point ici, Monarque des Enfers, Pour faire aucune violence Aux lieux soumis à ta puissance, Ni poussé du désir d'apprendre à l'univers Qu'Orphée a mis Cerbere aux fers. L'unique et cher objet pour qui mon cœur soupire, Euridice... A ce nom je sens manquer ma voix, Ma lyre, en cet instant, muette sous mes doigts, Ne peut plus exprimer mon rigoureux martyre. Soupirs, ardents soupirs, c'est à vous à le dire. Proserpine Pauvre amant, quel cœur de rocher Ne se laisserait pas toucher Aux tendres accents de ta plainte? Chœur d'Ombres Heureuses Pauvre amant, quel cœur de rocher Ne se laisserait pas toucher Aux tendres accents de ta plainte? Proserpine Donne relâche à tes soupirs, Raconte tes malheurs sans crainte, Je partage tes déplaisirs. Chœur d'Ombres Heureuses, de Coupables et de Furies Donne relâche à tes soupirs, Raconte tes malheurs sans crainte, Nous partageons tes déplaisirs. Orphée Euridice n'est plus, et mon feu dure encore. Cette naissante fleur ne faisait que d'éclore. Hélas! Dans son plus beau printemps Un serpent a fini sa triste destinée,	Could cause him to end my torments! Chorus of Furies and Criminals No one in the Underworld can resist Their victorious charms. Judge their power by the tears That you see us shed. Soften our inhuman hearts. Calm our burning pains. It belongs to you alone to undertake it. Your songs have such delights, how full of sweetness they are! No one in the Underworld can resist Their victorious charms. <i>Entrée of the Phantoms.</i> Third Scene <i>Pluton, Proserpine, Happy Shades singing and dancing, and the aforementioned.</i> Pluton What is this foolhardy mortal seeking in my palace? Does he dare to disturb the eternal silence? Does he see what will follow his criminal intention? Does he know the danger one runs in displeasing me? Orphée I do not come here, O Prince of the Underworld, To do any violence To the places under your power, Nor am I driven by the wish to tell the world That Orphée has put Cerberus in fetters. The sole and dear object for which my heart yearns, Euridice... At this name I sense my voice failing me, My lyre, suddenly, falling mute beneath my fingers, Can no longer express my harsh martyrdom. Sighs, ardent sighs, it is for you to speak of it. Proserpine Poor lover, what heart of stone Would not be affected By the tender strains of your plaint? Chorus of Happy Shades Poor lover, what heart of stone Would not be affected By the tender strains of your plaint? Proserpine Cease your sighing, Relate your misfortunes without fear, I share your sorrows. Chorus of Happy Shades, Condemned Ones, and Furies Cease your sighing, Relate your misfortunes without fear, We share your sorrows. Orphée Euridice is no more, yet my flame lives on. This youthful flower was only just blooming. Alas! In her most beautiful springtime A serpent ended her mournful destiny
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Sur le point qu'elle allait par un doux hyménée Récompenser mes feux constants. Ah! Laisse-toi toucher à ma douleur extrême, Rends-moi, Dieu des Enfers, cette rare beauté, Le jour m'est odieux sans la Nymphé que j'aime, Redonne-lui la vie, ou m'ôte la clarté. Pluton Le destin est contraire à ce que tu souhaites. Epoux infortuné, finis tes vains regrets, Les ombres qui me sont sujettes De l'empire des morts ne retournent jamais. Proserpine Ah! Puisqu'avant le temps la rigueur de la Parque A tranché le fil de ses jours, Permetts qu'elle revive, ô souverain monarque, Et qu'elle en achève le cours. Chœur d'Ombres Heureuses Permetts qu'elle revive, ô souverain monarque, Et qu'elle en achève le cours. Orphée Tu ne la perdras point, hélas, pour me la rendre. Tout mortel est soumis à la loi du trépas, Et ma chère Euridice aura beau s'en défendre, Il faut que tôt ou tard elle rentre ici bas. Ah! Laisse-toi toucher à ma douleur extrême, Rends-moi, Dieu des Enfers, cette rare beauté, Le jour m'est odieux sans la Nymphé que j'aime, Redonne-lui la vie, ou m'ôte la clarté. Pluton Quel charme impérieux m'incite à la tendresse? Et me fait plaindre son tourment? Pluton, aurais-tu la faiblesse De te laisser toucher aux regrets d'un amant? Proserpine Courage, Orphée, étale ici les plus grands charmes De tes accents mélodieux. Le plus inflexible des dieux Ne retient qu'à peine ses larmes. Chœur d'Ombres Heureuses, de Coupables et de Furies Courage, Orphée, étale ici les plus grands charmes De tes accents mélodieux. Le plus inflexible des dieux Ne retient qu'à peine ses larmes. Orphée Souviens-toi du larcin que tu fis à Cérès, Souviens-toi que l'Amour, Dans les yeux pleins d'attraits De ton Épouse incomparable, Choisit le plus beau de ses traits Dont le coup su percer ton cœur impénétrable. C'est par ce coup heureux dont ton cœur fut blessé,	As she was about to reward my constant ardor With the sweet ties of marriage. Ah! Let yourself be moved by my extreme pain, Return to me, God of the Underworld, this rare beauty. The light is hateful to me without the Nymph that I love: Restore her to life, or shroud me in darkness. Pluton Destiny is opposed to all your wishes. Unfortunate husband, end your vain regrets, These shadows that are my subjects Can never return from the empire of the dead. Proserpine Ah! Since the harsh Fates Severed her life's thread before her time, Allow her to live again, O sovereign king, And let her pursue its course. Chorus of Happy Shades Allow her to live again, O sovereign king, And let her pursue its course. Orphée You will not lose her, alas, in restoring her to me. Every mortal is subject to the decree of death, And my dear Euridice will resist it in vain. Sooner or later she will have to return here. Ah! Let yourself be moved by my extreme pain, Return to me, God of the Underworld, this rare beauty. The light is hateful to me without the Nymph that I love: Restore her to life, or shroud me in darkness. Pluton What imperious spell incites me to tenderness, And makes me pity his torment? Pluton, would you have the weakness To be moved by the regrets of a lover? Proserpine Take heart, Orphée, display the greatest charms Of your melodious strains. The most unyielding of gods Can scarcely hold back his tears. Chorus of Happy Shades, Condemned Ones, and Furies Take heart, Orphée, display the greatest charms Of your melodious strains. The most unyielding of gods Can scarcely hold back his tears. Orphée Remember the theft you made from Ceres, Remember how Cupid, In the attractive eyes Of your matchless spouse, Chose his finest dart To pierce your invulnerable heart. By this happy blow, with which your heart was wounded,
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C'est par ces yeux charmants d'où ce trait fut lancé Que le fidèle Orphée à tes pieds te conjure De soulager l'excès des peines qu'il endure. N'ont ils plus les appas dont tu fus enchanté? Ah! Laisse-toi toucher à ma douleur extrême, Rends-moi, Dieu des Enfers, cette rare beauté, Le jour m'est odieux sans la Nymphé que j'aime, Redonne-lui la vie, ou m'ôte la clarté. Pluton Je cède, je me rends, aimable Proserpine, Conjuré par vos yeux je n'ai plus de rigueur. Voyez ce que peut sur mon cœur Votre beauté divine. Retourne à la clarté du jour, Orphée amoureux et fidèle, Je vais tirer des mains de la Parque cruelle L'objet de ton amour. Sors triomphant de l'empire des ombres, Euridice suivra tes pas. Mais pour la regarder ne te retourne pas, Que tu ne sois sorti de ces demeures sombres. Sinon je la reprends par un second trépas. <i>Pluton et Proserpine disparaissent.</i> Orphée Amour, brûlant Amour, pourras tu te contraindre? Ah! Que le tendre Orphée à lui même est à craindre. <i>Il sort.</i> Scène 4eme <i>Ombres Heureuses, Coupables, Furies et Fantômes dansant.</i> Chœur d'Ombres Heureuses, de Coupables et de Furies Vous partez donc, Orphée? Ah! Regrets superflus! Soulagement trop court, Plaisirs trop peu durables, Hélas, vous êtes disparus Comme des songes agréables. Demeurez toujours avec nous, Charmante impression de cette voix touchante Qui nous ravit, qui nous enchante. Ixion, Tantale et Titye Tant que nous garderons un souvenir si doux Le bonheur des Enfers rendra le Ciel jaloux. Chœur d'Ombres Heureuses, de Coupables et de Furies Demeurez toujours avec nous, Charmante impression de cette voix touchante Qui nous ravit, qui nous enchante. Tant que nous garderons un souvenir si doux Le bonheur des Enfers rendra	By these charming eyes, from which this dart was fired, Faithful Orphée begs you at your feet To soften the excessive torments he suffers. Do they no longer have the charms that beguiled you? Ah! Let yourself be moved by my extreme pain, Return to me, God of the Underworld, this rare beauty. The light is hateful to me without the Nymph that I love: Restore her to life, or shroud me in darkness. Pluton I yield, I give in, lovely Proserpine. Beseeched by your eyes, I no longer feel any harshness. See what power your celestial beauty Has over my heart. Return to the brightness of daylight, Loving, faithful Orphée. I shall take back from the hands of the cruel Fates The object of your love. Leave this empire of shades triumphantly, Euridice will follow your steps. But do not turn around to look at her, Until you have quit this somber realm. Or else I will reclaim her for a second death. <i>Pluton and Proserpine disappear.</i> Orphée Love, burning Love, will you constrain yourself? Ah! How the tender Orphée must fear himself. <i>He exits.</i> Fourth Scene <i>Happy Shades, Condemned, Furies, and Dancing Phantoms.</i> Chorus of Happy Shades, Condemned Ones, and Furies You are leaving then, Orphée? Ah! Futile regrets! Relief too brief, Pleasures too fleeting, Alas, you have vanished Like pleasant dreams. Stay with us forever, Beguiling effect of this touching voice That ravishes and enchants us. Ixion, Tantale, and Titye As long as we retain so sweet a memory, The happiness of the Underworld will make the Heavens jealous. Chorus of Happy Shades, Condemned Ones, and Furies Stay with us forever, Beguiling effect of this touching voice That ravishes and enchants us. As long as we retain so sweet a memory, The happiness of the Underworld will make
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le Ciel jaloux. <i>Entrée des Fantômes.</i> Chœur d'Ombres Heureuses, de Coupables et de Furies Demeurez toujours avec nous, Charmante impression de cette voix touchante Qui nous ravit, qui nous enchante. Tant que nous garderons un souvenir si doux, Le bonheur des Enfers rendra le Ciel jaloux. <i>Fin du 3^e Acte.</i> [Le Manuscrit de Charpentier s'interrompt ici.]	the Heavens jealous. <i>Entrée of the Phantoms.</i> Chorus of Happy Shades, Condemned Ones, and Furies Stay with us forever, Beguiling effect of this touching voice That ravishes and enchants us. As long as we retain so sweet a memory, The happiness of the Underworld will make the Heavens jealous. <i>End of the Second Act.</i> [The Manuscript of Charpentier ends here.]
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***ORPHÉE DESCENDANT AUX ENFERS* (H471)**

MUSIC BY MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

TEXT ATTRIBUTED TO THOMAS CORNEILLE

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY GILBERT R. BLIN

The text of *Orphée descendant aux Enfers* has been transcribed from the manuscript of Charpentier. See: *Meslanges autographes* in *Œuvres complètes de Charpentier*, Vol. 6. Paris: Minkoff, 1996.

ORPHÉE DESCENDANT AUX ENFERS

Text and translation

Orphée descendant aux Enfers	Orpheus descending to the Underworld
Récit d'Orphée sur le violon Orphée Effroyables Enfers où je conduis mes pas, Aucun de vos tourments n'égale mon supplice ! Hélas ! Ou rendez-moi mon aimable Eurydice, Ou laissez-moi descendre aux ombres du trépas. Ixion & Tantale Quelle douce harmonie a frappé mon oreille ? Et de tous mes tourments a calmé la rigueur ? D'où vient que je soupire et qu'au fond de mon cœur De mes jeunes amours la flamme se réveille ? Orphée Vos plus grands criminels, rongés par des vautours Sur leurs tristes rochers, endurent moins de peine Qu'un malheureux amant que la Mort inhumaine Sépare pour jamais de ses tendres amours. Ixion & Tantale Ne cherchons plus d'où vient cette tendresse Qui remplit notre cœur d'une douce allégresse ! L'Amour, dont le divin flambeau Éclaire cet amant dans la nuit du tombeau, Nous a frappés d'un rayon de sa flamme. Orphée, Ixion & Tantale Hélas ! Rien n'est égal au bonheur des amants : Pour peu que l'Amour touche une âme, Elle ne ressent point tous les autres tourments.	Récit d'Orphée sur le violon Orphée Frightful underworld where I guide my steps, None of your torments can equal my punishment. Alas! Either give me back my beloved Eurydice, Or allow me to descend into the shadows of death. Ixion & Tantale What sweet harmony strikes my ear And soothes all rigors of my torments? From whence, so that I sigh and, in the depths of my heart, The flame of my youthful love revives? Orphée Your greatest criminals, gnawed by vultures On their sad rocks, endure less pain Than an unhappy lover whom inhuman Death Separates forever from his tender beloved. Ixion & Tantale Let us cease to search for the source of this tenderness That fills our hearts with gentle joy. Love, whose divine torch Enlightens this lover in the darkness of the tomb, Has struck us with the radiance of his flame. Orphée, Ixion & Tantale Alas! Nothing is equal to the happiness of lovers: Once love touches a soul, It can feel no other torments.

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